

Gallant Wanderers Foiled By Penalty

By "NOVA"

Hendon 2;

Wycombe Wanderers 1

WEALTHY Hendon, striving to become Isthmian League champions at the first attempt, added another two points to their already impressive tally with this hard-fought victory over Wycombe Wanderers on Saturday — thanks to a shrewd tactical move by coach Ron Burgess, the former Spurs star.

At half-time Wycombe were leading through a typical opportunist effort from Peter Lowen, yet the home side had been bearing down in raid after raid on the Wanderers' goal. But during this time the wily Burgess noted tough Peter Roystone's zeal in his tackling—so he switched winger Laurie Churchill with young Fred Pudney, who was making his debut, and instructed Churchill to worry the pivot.

The plan took six minutes to work. The two players clashed inside the penalty box and Tony Knox, Hendon's penalty ace, shot home his sixth goal of the season from the spot. Four minutes later Churchill again worried Roystone after a corner-kick and the unmarked Slade was able to

slide a pass through to O'Rourke, who scored the winning goal.

This was a great tactical victory for Hendon, but no one could deny they were worth both points. Their tough and powerful forward line gave the Wycombe defence a gruelling time, while their own defenders clamped down on any attempted Wycombe move.

ONE-WAY TRAFFIC

But for the brilliance of goal keeper Colin Bunting, making his return to the senior side after months in obscurity, and the resilience and spirit of his defending colleagues, Hendon might well have doubled their score. In the first half alone it was almost all one-way traffic. Yet somehow Wycombe not only survived but took the lead.

The Wanderers' forward-line spluttered occasionally to life, thanks to the promptings of Lewis and Beck, but only Brian French, who had a tremendous game, responded.

It was on the other flank, however, that the only goal of the first half started. After Bunting had distinguished himself with several fine saves, including one splendid attempt from a Slade pile-driver, newcomer Tony Williams, who started well but faded badly, chased a pass to the corner flag and sent over a long centre. Swannell and a defender misjudged the pace and while

they dithered Lowen pounced—and the ball was in the net.

Gradually Hendon recovered and just before half-time they bombarded the Wanderers' goal, only to be thwarted by a massed defence or the diving figure of Bunting.

THEIR REWARD

In the second half Hendon's more powerful attacking play brought its reward with the goals from Knox and O'Rourke.

Desperate defensive play, in which Beck, Pullin and the tenacious Maharg were outstanding, kept Hendon's lead down to a single goal, and this was almost wiped out by Lowen ten minutes from time. But his glorious long-range drive smacked against the cross-bar.

Against the league's top scorers, a single goal defeat without their two most dangerous forwards is no mean feat. But had the front line, French excepted, shown a little more strength, determination and willingness to hold the ball, Wycombe might have sneaked a draw. But this was exactly the right type of game for the Wanderers to tune up for their Amateur Cup test.

Hendon.—J. Swannell; M. Williams, B. Ellison; R. Walker, R. Sleap, T. Knox; L. Churchill, F. Pudney, P. Slade, G. O'Rourke, D. Hyde.

Wycombe.—C. Bunting; J. Beck, G. Pullin; G. Maharg, P. Roystone, A. Lewis; B. French, T. Horseman, P. Lowen, J. Balson, T. Williams.